

## **New Amsterdam Historic District**

General boundaries: CN railroad tracks, Woodward Avenue, Antoinette Avenue, and Second Avenue.

Local	v	12/17/01
State		
State Marker		
National	v	5/30/01



**440 Burroughs**



### **Historic overview:**

The New Amsterdam Historic District is a concentration of early twentieth century industrial buildings associated with Detroit's booming manufacturing base. The most significant physical development of the district occurred between 1900 and the 1930s, and few changes have been made since. Once a thriving industrial and commercial area, it included architecturally distinguished automobile factories, auto showrooms, repair garages and other businesses drawn by the ample lots and convenient location near downtown. A number of the district's buildings are fine examples of the reinforced concrete architecture of Albert Kahn.

As Detroit was growing as a city, the automobile industry has a significant impact on industrial engineering and the design of industrial buildings. With the increase in technology and production, a high demand was placed on factory construction. Detroit was in need of a new method of factory construction in order to improve productivity, as factories were often dark, dirty, confining and inefficient. Albert Kahn was the first in Detroit to apply reinforced concrete to respond to this issue. The method of construction resulted in buildings that were bright, sturdy, spacious, efficient and easy to maintain. By the late 1930s Kahn was responsible for nearly a fifth of the industrial buildings within the United States. Some of Kahn's work in the New Amsterdam district includes the Chevy Motor Car Company (1926), Oakland Motor Company (1927), and American Electrical Heater Company (1908). Examples of other manufacturing companies in the district were Peninsula Brass Works, Singer Sewing Machine Company, and Henderson Tire Company.